

BP
595
585

THOUGHTS on EASTER

The MYSTERY of PENTECOST in its relationship to the Ascension

The PENTECOST of the WORLD

Three Lectures by
RUDOLF STEINER, Ph.D.

(Shorthand Report unrevised by the Lecturer)

1932
H. COLLISON
27 CLAREVILLE GROVE, S.W.7.

This translation has been made from the
original of Rudolf Steiner by permission of
H. COLLISON, M.A, (Oxon)
by whom all rights are reserved .

*All Rudolf Steiner's Works can be obtained from H. C. COLLISON,
27 Clareville Grove, London, S.W.7*

Thoughts on Easter

THERE is an important difference between thoughts on Christmas and thoughts on Easter. Those who can compare these thoughts in the sense often spoken of here, and then bring them into the right relationship to each other, making this relationship inwardly alive, will be aware of an inner experience which in a certain sense contains the whole secret of humanity.

Christmas thoughts speak to us of birth; we know that through birth the eternal part of man enters a world from which he derives his visible, sensible nature. When we approach the thought of Christmas from this standpoint, we feel it as something that connects us with what is supersensible. Along with everything else it brings with it, such a thought seems to direct us to one pole of our existence where as physical beings of sense we come in touch with spiritual, supersensible existence. On this account, the birth of man, taken in its full meaning, can never be understood by a science which draws its conclusions merely from observation of physical sense existence.

The thoughts that form the basis of the Easter Festival lie at the other pole of human experience, and in the course of Western evolution they have developed more and more into thoughts that have built up the materialistic conceptions of the West. The thought of Easter can be grasped—at first perhaps somewhat

abstractly—when one realises that the eternal, immortal, part of men—the part that is not born—has come down like the spirit, from supersensible worlds, and has clothed itself with the human physical body. I have frequently shown from the most varied standpoints that the activity of the spirit within the physical body has from the beginning of this physical existence, really been an introduction of the physical body to death, and that with the thought of birth the thought of death also enters.

On other occasions I have explained to you how the organisation of the human head is only to be understood when we know that, fundamentally speaking, continual death is taking place there, and that this is only counter-acted by the life forces of the rest of the human organism. The forces of death are always present in the human head, making man's thought nature possible, and the moment these gain the upper hand over his mortal nature, death occurs. The thought of death is really but the other side of the thought of birth, and therefore cannot enter into the thought of Easter. At the time when Christianity still found its earliest form within Eastern mentality, the Pauline church directed the attention of men not so much to the death of Christ Jesus, but to His resurrection, and declared in the powerful words of Paul: "If the Christ be not risen, then is your faith dead."

The resurrection, the triumph over death, was primarily the Easter thought in early Christianity, that form of Christianity which was still influenced by the wisdom of the East. On the other side, however, we see pictures rise which represent Christ Jesus as the Good Shepherd Who watches over the eternal interests of man who sleeps through his mortal existence. Above

all, we see how early Christianity is directed to the words of the Gospel: "He whom ye seek is not here; you must not seek Him on the physical plane (so we might supplement the words); if you do we can but tell you—He Whom ye seek as physical Being is no longer here in this physical world of the senses."

The great and comprehensive wisdom which in the early Christian centuries was still capable of penetrating to the Mystery of Golgotha and to all that went with it, died down soon afterwards into the materialism of the West. This materialism had not fully emerged in the early centuries; it was prepared gradually. The early, as yet feeble, materialistic impulse of the first centuries, which was hardly perceptible, only changed much later into something that developed into a materialism that more and more permeated the whole civilisation of the West. The religious thought of the East had been joined to the evolving state-controlled thought of the West. In the fourth century Christianity became the state religion, which means that something entered Christianity which no longer was religion.

Julian, the Apostate, who though no Christian was a religious man, could in no way accept what Christianity had become through Constantine. In the blending of Christianity with declining Romanism, we see how, at first weakly, but quite noticeably, the influence of Western materialism made its first appearance. It was under this influence that a representation of Christ Jesus appeared which was not seen anywhere at first, and, indeed, did not exist in original Christianity: the representation of Christ Jesus as the crucified suffering Man of Sorrows, as the Man Who perished under the burden of the unspeakable sufferings that came upon Him.

Through this a break occurred in the whole outlook of the Christian world; for this presentation of the crucified, pain-filled Christ, which since then has continued through the centuries, is a Christ Who can no longer be grasped in His spiritual nature, but only in His corporal nature. The more that signs of suffering were imprinted on the human body, the more that Art, in all its perfection, gave expression to the suffering Redeemer throughout the various epochs, so much the more were seeds of materialism implanted in Christian perception. The crucifix expresses the transition into Christian materialism. This in no way denies that what Art has embodied as the pain of the Redeemer in so stupendous a way must not be recognised in its full depth and meaning; but all the same it is true that with this presentation of the Redeemer dying under the sufferings of the Cross a departure was made from the really spiritual acceptance of Christianity.

With this acceptance of Christ as the Man of sorrow was mingled the idea of "Christ, the Judge of the World," in whom we have really to see another expression of Jahve or Jehova, especially of that Jehova transformed into a judge in so magnificent a manner in the Sistine chapel in Rome. The Spirit that was victor over death, that triumphed over the grave from which the Redeemer rose victorious, is the same Spirit which, in the representation of the crucifix we are permitted to lose sight of; this is the same Spirit, which in the year 869 at the Eighth Oecumenical Council in Constantinople, was declared to be something that it was unnecessary for man to believe. At that Council it was decreed that man must be held to consist of body and soul, and that spirit only occurs in certain attributes of the soul. Just as we have seen the Spirit expelled

from the crucifix, and only that left which pain-racked souls can feel without the Spirit triumphant, the Spirit that supports, and at the same time cares for men, so in the conclusions of the Council of Constantinople we have to see the Spirit struck off from the nature of man.

Good Friday and the Easter Day festival of the Resurrection were compressed into one. In the days when men were not so dry and void of understanding as they became later, the Festival of Good Friday, became, in a certain sense, a festival in which the thoughts of Easter were transformed in an absolutely egotistic manner. Individual souls steeped themselves in pain; they rejoiced, as it were, to wallow in pain. During long periods of time this was the thought of Good Friday which had been intended originally to serve but as a background for the thought of Easter. All comprehension of Easter in its true acceptance became less and less possible. For those persons who had exalted into belief the principle that they consisted of body and soul alone, required to have their feelings stirred by the representation of the dying Redeemer. They required to be confronted with a picture of physical pain, in order that it might serve as a background (at least in an outward sense) for the perception which was theirs originally, that the living Spirit must always be victor over anything that might happen to the physical body. Men had need of the picture of the martyrs' death in order to experience, by way of contrast, the true thoughts of Easter. You must try to experience more and more deeply, how true spiritual perception and the true spiritual point of view gradually weakened, and to look with amazement, and at the same time with a consciousness of the tragedy of it all, on the artistic attempts that were made to represent the suffering Man on the Cross.

It is not enough that we should turn our attention, with a few casual thoughts and feelings, to the things that are necessary for our day. We must thoroughly investigate that which, in respect to what is spiritual, has for long been on the downward path in Western civilisation. It is very necessary for us at the present time that those things which are greatest in one realm should also be felt as something to which humanity must rise. We have need of the thoughts of Easter throughout all Western civilisation. In other words, we have need of something that will raise us again to that which is spiritual. The holy mystery of birth—the mystery of Christmas—which emerged magnificently at one time in Western culture, has gradually been lost sight of in the evolving civilisation of the West; it has sunk down into those sentimentalities which are but the other pole of a materialistic development, and which simply revel in all kinds of songs about the little Jesus. It was a plunging into pleasurable emotions regarding the little child. Instead of feeling the stupendous mystery of the entrance of a *super-earthly Spirit* in the Christmas mystery; trivial songs about the Babe Jesus gained a predominant influence and set the fashion all through Europe. It is characteristic of the development of that Christianity which followed purely intellectual lines, that up to the present day certain writers in this domain have gone so far as to say: The gospels are not mainly concerned with the Son but with the Father—yet even this Christianity retains the resurrection, though thoughts of the resurrection are always mixed up with thoughts of death. It is, however, characteristic of the modern evolution of Christianity that the thought of Good Friday, in the form I have just described it, has come ever more to the fore, and the thought of the

Resurrection—the true Easter thought—has gradually retired. Thoughts on Easter must point especially to a time in which man must experience the resurrection of his being through the Spirit. We have need of Easter thoughts, and of a full understanding of such thoughts. For this, however, it is necessary that we realise that the Man of Sorrows is just as much the sign of the entrance of materialism into Western civilisation as is, on the other hand, the idea of the purely juridical World-Judge.

We have, indeed, need of the Christ as a super-sensible Being, as a Being Who is above and beyond the earth and yet has entered into earthly evolution. We must reach up with our human conceptions to such solar conceptions.

Just as we must realise that thoughts of the birth at Christmas have become such that they have dragged trivial sentimental feelings into one of the greatest of mysteries, so we have also to recognise how necessary it is to stress the fact that something entered earthly evolution at that time which is incomprehensible to *earthly* means of cognition, but is comprehensible to *spiritual* knowledge.

Spiritual knowledge finds its greatest support in the Resurrection, and recognises that the eternal spiritual part, even of man, is untouched by what is physical and of the body. It recognises in the words of St. Paul, "If Christ be not risen, then is your faith vain," confirmation of the real nature of the Christ, a confirmation which in time to come will be reached by other and more conscious methods.

It is in this way that we must recall thoughts of Easter at the present time. In this way we must make

of this season an inward festival, one in which we solemnise the victory of the Spirit over that which is of the body.

As we cannot disregard history, we must keep before us the pain-stricken Jesus on the Cross—the Man of Sorrow; but above the Cross must appear the Victor, untouched equally by birth and death, Who can alone direct our gaze to the everlasting fields of spiritual life. Only in this way can we approach the true nature of the Christ. Western humanity has drawn the Christ down to its own level, has drawn Him down as a little child, as One pre-eminent in suffering and death.

I have frequently said that the words of Buddha, "Death is evil," came from his lips just as long *before* the Mystery of Golgotha as the crucifix appeared *after* they were uttered. Men looked on the crucified One and found death was no evil but something that in truth did not exist. This feeling, which arose out of the wisdom of the West, yet is profounder than Buddhism, underlay the other which adhered firmly to the view of the pain-oppressed Sufferer. We must rise not only in thought—for these are most inadequate—but with the whole scope of our feeling to what I might call the fate which in the course of the centuries overtook man's conception of the Mystery of Golgotha. We must keep in mind that even among the ancient Hebrews, Jahve was not thought of as a judge of the world in a juristic sense. The Book of Job, the greatest dramatic presentation of religious feeling among the ancient Hebrews, which presents to us the suffering Job, excludes the idea of external justice. Job is a suffering man, a man who regards what happens to him in the external world as fate. The legal idea of retaliation only entered gradually into the organisation of the world. Yet in a certain way what is represented

in Michael Angelo's masterpiece in the Sistine Chapel is like a revival of the Jahve-Principle. It is the Christ we have need of, however, the Christ Whom we can seek in our own inner beings, and Who at once appears when we do seek Him. We have need of the Christ Who enters into our *wills*, Who gives warmth and fire to our wills that they may become strong to accomplish those deeds on behalf of humanity for which we long. We have need of that Christ, Whom we do not regard as the suffering Man of Sorrows, but as He Who has risen above the Cross, and thence looks down on that unreality which ended with the Cross. We have need of the vivid consciousness of the *eternity of the Spirit*.

We do not have this vivid consciousness of the Spirit when we lose ourselves in contemplation of the picture of the crucifixion; and when we see how this has gradually been changed more and more into something that calls up feeling of sorrow and suffering, we will realise what power this tendency of men's feeling has acquired. It has turned men's eyes from what is truly spiritual, and directed them to that which is earthly and physical. It is certainly occasionally expressed in a grand way, but it has always seemed to men like Goethe, for example, who have ever felt the need for our civilisation to reach up once more to what is spiritual, to be something in which they could not really participate. Goethe has said often enough that the crucified Saviour does not express to him what he feels in Christianity: the uplifting of man to that which is spiritual.

Of necessity it has come to pass that the characteristic note of Good Friday as well as that of Easter has changed. Good Friday has become that which brings along with it the contemplation of the end of Jesus; and with this the feeling that what is then contemplated is

but the other side of birth, and those who do not see death equally in birth do not see with completeness.

Those who are not capable of feeling that in the atmosphere of death with which Good Friday is associated only one side of existence is presented to them; the opposite pole being that which is presented by the entrance of a child at birth into the world, are not prepared in the right way for the real Easter note, which is that we should realise: Whatever may be the human sheaths that here are born, the real man is not born nor does he die. The real man must unite himself with that which has entered the world as the Christ Who cannot die, and he must regard something other than himself when he looks on the suffering man on the Cross. We must feel what really has happened since the end of the early centuries through Western civilisation having gradually lost the conception of what is spiritual. The Easter of the world will only come when a sufficient number of people feel that the Spirit must rise again within Western civilisation. Outwardly this will find expression in that men will no longer wish to explore what is going to happen to them, will not explore natural laws or the laws of past history which are similar to natural laws, but they will have a great longing for knowledge of their own wills, of their own freedom; they will desire greatly to realise the nature of their own will which can bear them beyond the gates of death but which must be considered spiritually if it is to be perceived in its true form.

How is man to gain power to rise to the thought of Pentecost, the outpouring of the Spirit, since the eighth Eocumenical Council has dogmatically explained the thought of Pentecost to be an empty phrase?

How is man to win to the power of this thought if

he does not do so by way of Easter thoughts—by true Easter thoughts, thoughts of the resurrection of the Spirit!

Man must not allow himself to be led astray by the picture of the dying, suffering Redeemer, but must learn how pain is bound up with the whole composition of human existence. This was a fundamental principle of that ancient wisdom which sprang from the instinctive depths of human knowledge. We must strive to re-acquire this instinctive knowledge with the help of conscious knowledge. One of the fundamental principles of this knowledge was that pain had its origin in matter. In any case it would be foolishness to think that the Christ did not suffer pain because He passed through death as a Divine Being, it would be to think without reality were it said that the pain of the Mystery was only apparent. It must be considered real in the most actual sense, and not merely as symbolical. Something further has to be gained from what faces us when, with the whole of human evolution in view, we contemplate the mystery of Golgotha.

In ancient times a pupil of the mysteries who was about to be initiated was shown a picture of a man who had reached the highest point of freedom. Such a pupil when he had gone through the necessary preparation and had fulfilled all the exercises required of him in order that he might gain certain knowledge, was confronted with dramatic pictures; he was ultimately placed before the picture of a man who had passed through the severest physical sufferings, who was clothed in a red-purple robe and had a crown of thorns on his head—the picture of the Chrestos. In looking upon this Chrestos the soul of the aspirant to initiation was expected to gain the power which would make of him a

true man. The drops of blood which were shown to the aspirant on all the more important places of that ancient Chrestos were for the purpose of removing all human weaknesses and calling up the triumphant Spirit from the man's inner being.

The contemplation of suffering was intended to indicate the resurrection of the spiritual nature. It was sought to place before men in the most profound sense what may be expressed in the following simple words—Thou hast to thank many things in life for thy happiness, but if thou hast acquired knowledge—gained insight into spiritual connections, thou hast to thank suffering for these. Thou must be thankful that thou hast not succumbed to sorrow and suffering, but hast had the power to rise above them.

This is the reason why in the mysteries of old, the picture of the suffering Chrestos was replaced by the other picture—that of the triumphant Christ, who looked down upon the suffering Chrestos as on something that had been surmounted.

In a similar way it must be found possible once again to have the triumphant Christ before and in our souls, and especially in our wills. This is what we must keep before us at the present time, and more especially we must keep it before us with regard to what we wish to do to help in bringing about a sound future for humanity.

We will never be able to grasp the true thought of Easter unless we realize that in speaking of the Christ we must look upwards from what is merely earthly to what is *cosmic*. Modern thought has made a corpse of the cosmos. To-day we look at the stars and calculate their courses. This means we calculate something about the corpse of the world—we do not see

that life dwells in the stars, and that in the courses of the stars the intentions of the cosmic Spirit rule. Christ came down among men in order to unite the souls of men with the Cosmic Spirit. Only a true expounder of the Gospel of Christ points out that what we see in the physical sun is the outward expression of the Spirit of our universe—the *resurrecting Spirit of our universe*.

Such connection as that between this World-Spirit and the sun is something that must become living to us, and the way in which the festival of Easter is determined—through the relationship of sun and moon in spring—must become living to us again. We must be able to associate with it what the Easter festival has ordained for earthly evolution from out the cosmos itself. We must realise that it was the most watchfully protective Cosmic Spirits who, by means of the world timepiece whose pointers for earthly existence are the sun and moon, made us understand that the moment in which the resurrection occurred has to be regarded as the greatest and most important point of time in the evolution of both the universe and man. Through the spirit we must learn to feel the movements of these two pointers (sun and moon) just as for physical occasions we must learn the movements of the hands of a clock. We must learn to connect what is earthly and physical with what is super-earthly and super-physical.

The thought of Easter can only bear interpretation by what is super-earthly, for in the Mystery of Golgotha (in so far as it is a resurrection mystery) something took place which distinguishes it from all other events.

Through it the earth has been endowed with cosmic powers, and because of what she has become through this, human forces of will have arisen within human alimentation. A new concentration of will power has

? typographical error
It is evolution must correct translation

entered earthly activities because of the Mystery of Golgotha, something took place on earth at that time which might be described as *Cosmic activities*, for which the earth was but a stage. Through these activities man has once more been united with the cosmos.

This is something which must be understood, and comprehension of it in all its fullness is first given by the thought of Easter. Therefore, however beautifully, however splendidly Art has represented the crucifixion, it alone must not rise before our souls with the thought of Easter, but the thought must rise: "He Whom thou seekest is not here." Beyond the cross He must appear, He Who is here now, He Who speaks to us from the Spirit, in order to awaken the spirit in us.

This is what must enter human evolution as the thought of Easter; it is this to which the human heart and the human mind must rise.

It is not enough in our time that we should be able to enter thoroughly into and steep ourselves in what has been created up to now. *We must become newly creative.* Even were it at the cross, with all the beauty with which artists have endowed it, we may not rest there: we must harken to the words of the Spiritual Being Who, when we look for Him in death and suffering, calls to us: "He Whom ye seek is no longer here."

Therefore we must seek that which is here. At Easter we must learn to turn to the Spirit, and the picture of the resurrection is alone able to present this to us. Only with it before us can we pass in the right way from the sorrow-filled atmosphere of Good Friday to the joyful atmosphere of Easter Day. In it we will be able to find what we have to grasp with our wills in order that we may become active in changing the downward

tending forces of humanity into upward tending forces.
We are in need of forces capable of doing this.

The moment that we understand the resurrection thought of Easter aright, this thought, warm and illuminating, will kindle in us the forces that are necessary for the future evolution of mankind.

Dornach, 27th March, 1921.

The Mystery of Pentecost and the Ascension

EVOLVING humanity has placed before it mighty pictures gathered from out all the various systems of religion, for the full comprehension of which a kind of esoteric comprehension is necessary.

In the course of recent years the four Gospels have been interpreted to you from the Anthroposophical point of view, and in order to do this we made use of esoteric Anthroposophical knowledge to bring the profounder contents of these into the light of day. As a rule the contents of the Gospels are presented in pictures, the reason for this is that pictures do not require to be communicated in such a narrow rationalistic way as do conceptions and ideas. Many people hold the opinion as regards ideas and conceptions that once they have accepted an idea they understand everything concerned with it. With pictures, that is with imaginations, such an opinion does not hold. Pictures or imaginations act in a living way; one might say they act almost as living beings. We learn to know a living being—a man, for instance—from one side or from another, but ever and again we must learn to know him from some new side. We are not satisfied with definitions intended to cover the whole case, but endeavour to arrive at characteristics that build up a picture from various sides, turning this more and more into knowledge of the man.

I would like to call up two pictures before your

souls to-day, pictures that you are already well acquainted with, and explain certain things connected with them. One is the picture which the Disciples of Christ Jesus present to us as the Ascension, telling how looking upwards they saw the Christ floating in the clouds. This picture is usually accepted so that the Christ is seen travelling heavenwards, having forsaken the earth, and the Disciples are left, as it were, to themselves; earthly humanity for whom the Christ passed through the Mystery of Golgotha is therefore left to itself after His journey heavenwards.

It might easily be thought that in a certain sense this contradicts the reality of the Mystery of Golgotha. We know indeed that through this Mystery the Christ decided actually to unite His Being with the being of the earth, and from that point of time onwards to remain in permanent connection with earthly evolution. One might therefore see the stupendous picture of the Ascension set, as it were, in opposition to that which is revealed to esoteric vision in connection with the Mystery of Golgotha, as regards the union of the Christ with the being of the earth and with humanity.

We will endeavour to-day to dispel this apparent contradiction with the help of true spiritual facts.

The second picture that I would like to call up before your souls is that in which, ten days after the Ascension, when the Disciples were gathered together, fiery tongues came down upon the head of each of them so that they felt moved, as the popular expression has it, to speak in different tongues. What this really means, however, is that from now on it was possible for each human heart—whatever the faith to which it might have previously adhered—to realise the Mystery of Golgotha.

These two pictures we desire to call up before your

souls to-day, in order to contribute somewhat (it naturally cannot be much) towards their elucidation.

We know that human evolution did not begin upon the earth, but that this evolution was preceded by the Moon evolution, this by the Sun evolution, and this in its turn by the Saturn evolution, as is told in my book, "An Outline of Occult Science." We know further that during the Sun evolution man evolved downwards as far as to the physical body, that this body was at that time essentially a body of warmth, that means a sum of differentiations and activities of warmth, as described in my book; man was, as it were, imbedded in and surrounded by soul and spirit.

We know also that during the Sun evolution man acquired a body of air, during the Moon evolution a more or less fluid body, and that only during earthly evolution did he acquire his solid true earth-body.

Now let us recall the course of earthly evolution. This proceeded, as you already know, in seven succeeding epochs. The first was to a certain extent a repetition of the Saturn evolution, the second of the Sun evolution, the third was a repetition of the Moon evolution. This has been named the Lemurian epoch. With these four epochs the actual evolution of the earth was set agoing, and, as you know, we are now living in the fifth epoch which will be followed by a sixth and a seventh.

The central point of earthly evolution falls within the middle of the fourth—the Atlantean epoch. At the present time, therefore, the earth has passed its culmination, the actual centre of its evolution. From this you must conclude that the earth is already in a declining evolution, and I have frequently remarked that this is in entire agreement with the conclusions of materialistic geology.

In his book, "The Face of the Earth," Ed. Suess says that the solid earth on which we walk to-day actually belongs to an earth that is dying; it was in middle-age during the Atlantean epoch, and was then full of inward life. At that time no such formations were to be found as the stones we have to-day, which can be broken in pieces; minerals were active within the earth then in the same way they are active to-day within an animal organism, where, when the animal organism is sick they reveal themselves in all kinds of deposits; when the animal organism is sound the only deposit formed is that of the bones. To-day these have still an inward life; they have not that content of death, that tendency to become pulverised and to perish as is the case with the rocks of our mountains. The crumbling of rocks is simply a sign that the earth is already in a process of disintegration—of death.

This, as I have said, is a piece of knowledge already known to ordinary materialistic geology. To this Anthroposophy has to add that the earth has been in a process of declining evolution ever since the middle of the Atlantean epoch. As belonging to the earth we have, however, to reckon all that appertains to the earth—the plants, the animals, and, above all, physical humanity. Physical man belongs to the earth, and as the earth is in a declining process of its evolution, so also is the physical body of man in a declining process of evolution. Expressed differently—esoterically—this means the following: By the middle of the Atlantean epoch all that was originally implanted within the warmth-body of Saturn had attained completion. The human physical body had really reached completion at that time, since when its evolution has tended downwards. Evolution does not progress evenly; a certain

phase of development appears earlier in one race or people, and later in another.

When the age drew near in which the Mystery of Golgotha took place, the evolution of the human physical body was such that all humanity was faced with the prospect of not being able any longer to incorporate on the earth. This meant that they could no longer have a share in the declining evolution of the earth.

A fact well known in the schools of initiation, and that can naturally be known also to-day, was that about the time of the Mystery of Golgotha the human physical body had reached such a state of decline that the men incorporated at that time or who were about to be incorporated shortly afterwards, and until about the fourth century, were confronted with the danger of having the earth become barren and empty and of finding it impossible in the future to descend from spiritual worlds or to form bodies for themselves out of physical earthly substances. This danger existed, and men would have actually been obliged to fail in their earthly destiny.

The co-operation of Lucifer and Ahriman had brought things to such a pass at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha that man would have died out on the earth, but by what was accomplished through this great Mystery he was saved from the forces of destruction. The invigorating forces of which the physical body had need were imparted to it once more, so that man was enabled to continue his further evolution on earth, to come down from the realms of the soul and spirit and again enter into and dwell in physical bodies. This was the result, the entirely real result, of the Mystery of Golgotha.

I have already indicated that these are the lines along which the results of this Mystery are to be found;

among other courses of lectures I spoke of this in lectures given in Karlsruhe, in a cycle entitled, "From Jesus to Christ." This stirred up great enmity because it contained many truths which people wished should remain veiled, but which had to be spoken of from a sense of esoteric duty. It is certainly the truth that enmity was directed towards Anthroposophy from many directions just because of this course of lectures. Well, that was an actual result from one side.

The same fact can naturally be expressed in many ways, and in that lecture I did express it differently; what I have explained to-day is the same only taken from a different side. It was the case, therefore, that because of the Mystery of Golgotha the powers of growth, and the development of physical humanity were kindled anew.

Through this it became possible for man to receive an impulse when in the state of sleep which otherwise he could not have received. The whole of human evolution takes place within the conditions of sleeping and waking. In sleep the physical body and etheric body remain behind; from the moment of falling asleep until awaking the astral body and ego are independent of them. During this state of independence in sleep the active penetration by the Christ-force occurs in those men who, because of the soul-content they have acquired, are fittingly prepared for the state of sleep. It is in the state of sleep that penetration by the Christ-force mainly occurs.

Try now to picture to yourselves that at the time in which the scene of the Ascension is presented to us the Disciples had become so far clairvoyant that they could behold that which is the real mystery of earthly evolution. It is true that the mysteries of the evolution of the

earth pass by the normal consciousness of mankind; men cannot know whether at a certain moment something of the highest importance for human evolutions has taken place or not. Many things occur thus that the ordinary consciousness is not aware of. The real meaning of what is presented to us in the scene of the Ascension is that the Disciples of Christ became capable at that moment of observing something which took place, as it were, "behind the scene," which was of the greatest import to earthly evolution. What they saw, revealed to them in pictures—in far perspective—what would have happened if the Event of Golgotha had not taken place. It rose before them in spiritual bodily form, and this is what would have happened:—

The etheric body that is in man would have followed its forces of attraction—for the ether body is continually attracted not towards the earth, but towards the sun. We are so constituted as men that our physical bodies have the heaviness appertaining to the earth, and our ether bodies the lightness appertaining to the sun. The ether body strives continually towards the sun. If the human physical body had become what it must have become had there been no mystery of Golgotha, then the etheric body would have followed its urge towards the sun. In this case, humanity as earthly humanity, would naturally have ceased to exist.

In the sense in which it has often been spoken of here, the sun was the dwelling place of the Christ up to the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. The ether body of man in that it strives towards the sun strives therefore towards the Christ.

Now, call up before you the picture of the Ascension: Before the eyes of the Disciples the Christ rises heavenwards. This means that before the eyes of the

Disciples' souls was conjured forth the vision of how the etheric nature of mankind in its upward striving unites itself with the power, with the Impulse of Christ. Therefore, the Disciples saw how at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha man was faced with the danger of seeing his ether body attracted cloudwards—towards the sun, but also how the Christ held that which then strove heavenwards, together. This picture has to be understood aright. It is really a warning. The Christ was already united with the earth, but He belongs to those forces in man which actually strive towards the sun, which desire for ever to leave the earth. It is the Christ Who holds men firmly to the earth.

In the picture of the Ascension which thus arose before the soul-eyes of the Disciples there was revealed what would have happened had the Mystery of Golgotha not taken place.

Suppose that this Mystery had not taken place, and that a certain number of people had become clairvoyant to the same degree as the Disciples were at that moment, these would have seen how the ether bodies of certain people left the earth for the sun. They would have known that this was the path the ether body would take; that the earthly-etheric nature of man would withdraw to the sun.

But now, the Mystery of Golgotha had taken place; the Christ had saved the earth from this flight towards the sun. In this sunward tendency which was restrained by the Christ, the fact is clearly demonstrated that the Christ has remained united with the humanity of the earth. Something else is also demonstrated by it, namely, that through the Mystery of Golgotha the Christ had actually introduced a *cosmic event* into earthly evolution. The Christ came down from spiritual

heights, and in the man Jesus of Nazareth united Himself with humanity; He passed through the Mystery of Golgotha, and has associated *His* evolution with the evolution of the earth. It was a deed which was done for the whole of humanity.

Try to grasp this fact correctly:—The Mystery of Golgotha was accomplished for humanity. Clairvoyant vision must ever behold how the etheric forces of humanity that constantly seek to separate from the earth are united with the Christ; and how the Christ is able to hold them back for earthly evolution. This is of great importance to humanity. But now consider the following:—

Let us suppose that only a handful of people had been able to rise to the knowledge and the understanding of such facts as were connected with the Mystery of Golgotha, and that there was a large number, as was actually the case, who did not recognise the importance of this event. In that case the earth would have been inhabited by a small number of true followers of Christ, and a very large number of people who did not recognise the true content of the Mystery of Golgotha. How would it have been with these people? What would have been the connection of these people to the Mystery of Golgotha when they did not recognise what it was; or rather, what connection would the Mystery of Golgotha—the deed of Christ—have had to these people

Now, my dear friends, the Deed of Christ on Golgotha is an objective fact, and does not depend in its cosmic aspect on whether man believes in it or not.

The essential thing in an objective fact is the fact itself. When an oven is warm it is not cold just because a number of people believe it to be cold.

The Mystery of Golgotha was the rescue from de-

struction of the physical body of humanity, independently of whether humanity believed in it or not. This Mystery was enacted therefore, for all men, even for those who did not believe in it. This fact must be grasped first of all. You, my friends, have thoroughly understood this point, that the Mystery of Golgotha took place in order to introduce fresh forces into the physical body of man, to renew humanity, to revive it on earth, as it were, to the degree necessary for its rejuvenation. This was done. The possibility was thereby given to mankind of finding bodies in which it could incarnate for a yet far reaching future period. All the same, men passed at first only as soul and spirit-beings, through such rejuvenated earthly bodies, they were able to appear again and again on earth. The Christ Impulse—which now was to have meaning for the spiritual part of man's being, not only for the physical body—was able to extend to the waking consciousness of man, but it could not extend to his sleeping condition of consciousness if the soul did not desire to take into itself knowledge of this Impulse.

We may therefore say: The Mystery of Golgotha would have taken place for the waking condition of man even if he had not accepted the knowledge of this Mystery; but it would not have taken place for his sleeping condition. The consequence of this would have been as follows: Men would certainly have continued to incarnate on earth, but sleep would have been such that their soul and spirit nature would necessarily have lost all connection with the Christ unless they had acquired knowledge of the Mystery of Golgotha.

Here you have the difference between those who did, and those who did not seek understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha.

The Christ had fulfilled His mission on earth as regards their bodies, as regards the possibility of life for them on earth—this He has done also for the heathen—but in respect of their soul and spirit-nature it was necessary that the Christ Impulse should sink into the souls of men also during the condition of sleep. In order that this might be, men had consciously to become acquainted with the content of the Mystery of Golgotha. The true spiritual result of the Mystery of Golgotha can therefore only proceed from a right recognition of what is contained therein. This means, that it must come to pass that men gain on the one hand knowledge of how the ether body strives continually sunwards and is held back by the Christ; on the other hand, how the spirit and soul-nature of man, his ego and astral body, must receive the Christ Impulse in the condition between falling asleep and waking; for this they must prepare themselves by gaining knowledge of these facts in their conscious waking state.

Let us call up before our souls the picture of the Ascension: the Disciples having become clairvoyant see the sunward tendency of the ether bodies of men. The Christ unites Himself with this tendency and restrains it. What this mighty picture represents is this—*the saving of the physical and etheric part of man by the Christ*.

The Disciples are astounded at what they see, they ponder deeply, sink deeply within themselves. Then in their souls dawns the knowledge that through the Mystery of Golgotha all that was done was, in the first case, for the physical and etheric nature of man. What then was done for the soul and spirit-nature? From whence does man receive power to take the Christ Impulse up into his ego and astral nature?

Through the Mystery of Golgotha the Christ Impulse has been consummated on earth in such a way that it can only be thoroughly understood by the powers of spiritual knowledge. No materialistic powers of understanding, no materialistic science can comprehend this Mystery. The soul must lift itself up to spiritual powers of understanding, to spiritual powers of vision and of feeling, before it can understand how the Christ Impulse united itself on Golgotha with the impulses of the earth. That this might come to pass, the Christ accomplished His Deed on Golgotha; and He completed it so that just ten days after the Ascension He sent to men the power whereby they were enabled to permeate their inner soul and spirit-nature, that is, their ego and astral body, with the Christ-Impulse.

The picture of Pentecost signifies this: *The permeation of the soul and spirit of man with power by which he can understand the Mystery of Golgotha.* The sending of the Holy Spirit.

The Christ accomplished His Deed for the whole of humanity. To individuals who are able to understand this Deed—to the individual human being, He has sent the *Spirit*, so that the individual soul and spirit can find access to that which was done for all humanity. By means of the Spirit man must inwardly—soulfully and spiritually—unite himself with the Mystery of Golgotha. Two pictures thus succeed each other in the story of human evolution. That of the Ascension tells us: The deed of Golgotha was consummated for the physical and etheric bodies of men *generally*. The individual must make it fruitful for himself by receiving into him the Holy Spirit. The Christ Impulse thus becomes *individual* for each one.

Something more has still to be added to the eluci-

dation of the picture of the Ascension. Such spiritual vision as the Disciples had on the day of Ascension is always connected with something the man had already experienced in one or another of his states of consciousness. You are well aware that after death man experiences the going forth of his etheric body. With death he lays the physical body aside. For a few days he retains his etheric body, then it dissolves: it really is united with the sun-nature. This dissolution after death is really union with the sun-nature that permeates space, and within which the earth is also.

Ever since the Mystery of Golgotha men have actually been able to see this etheric body withdrawing and uniting with the Christ who has become its saviour and preserver for future earthly existence. So that actually since the Mystery of Golgotha every human being on dying has before his soul the picture which the Disciples saw, because of their exceptional soul condition, on the Day of Ascension.

For those who can participate in the mystery of Pentecost—who allow the Holy Spirit to draw near to them, this picture is the greatest comfort they can have after death; they now realise the whole truth of the Mystery of Golgotha, and this picture comforts them. What the picture of the Ascension says to them is this: Thou canst trust earthly evolution with all thy succeeding lives on earth, for through the Mystery of Golgotha the Christ had become the Saviour of earthly evolution. But to those who do not fill their ego and astral body consciously with the content of this Mystery, this picture may become a reproach, and it remains a reproach so long as they do not recognise that they must learn to understand it.

It is, as it were, an exhortation to them after death,

which urges them:—Try in your next life, it seems to say, to acquire power by which you can understand the Mystery of Golgotha. It is natural that the picture of the Ascension should appear at first as an exhortation, for men can indeed strive in the succeeding life on earth to acquire these powers and so acquire an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha.

Consider the difference between those who with inward powers of belief, of knowledge, and of feeling, believe in this mystery and those who do not. It is true that the Mystery of Golgotha took place generally, only for the physical and etheric bodies of men; but the sending of the Holy Spirit—Pentecost—shows how the soul and spirit of man can participate in the fruits of that Mystery only when a true *recognition of the content thereof* has been gained. It shows at the same time (because the content of the Mystery of Golgotha can only be grasped by spiritual understanding, not material understanding) that the true Pentecost is only understood when men also realise that the sending of the Spirit is a challenge to men to work themselves up gradually to a knowledge of the Spirit, for only through spirit-knowledge can the Mystery of Golgotha be grasped. The challenge contained in the Mystery of Golgotha is to the *understanding* of men.

That it was a deed performed for all men is revealed in the secret of the Ascension. These two things follow each other in the Christian interpretation of human evolution—the Ascension reveals the fact that Christ accomplished His deed for all men; it was a *universal* act; the Mystery of Pentecost lays on *individuals* the injunction to take into themselves the Impulse of the Mystery of Golgotha. We may, therefore, say with regard to these matters that Anthroposophy consists in

this: That men should acquire a right understanding of the Mystery of Pentecost in its connection with the revelation of the Ascension. When we feel that Anthroposophy stands forth as a sort of elucidator more especially as regards these two spring festivals, we realise that to the many shades it already presents to us there is one more that must of necessity be added.

What has been said should tell something of the right tone of feeling that Anthroposophy can impart with regard to these two festivals. The pictures they call up before the souls of men are like living beings: we can learn to know them better and better.

When men can rise once more to filling the year with a spiritual understanding of such festival seasons, then the year will indeed become something concrete; it will acquire a spiritual cosmic content, and men will learn thereby to participate in cosmic existence already during earthly existence.

When the festival of Whitsunside, which before all others is a festival of flowers, is felt aright, people go forth wherever flowers are springing, where they are opening under the influence of the sun—under the influence of the etheric-astral sun forces—and in the flower-decked earth men are aware that they have a reflection of that which they see condensed in the picture of the Ascension of Christ and in the tongues of fire that appeared above the heads of the Disciples. The opening heart of man may here be seen symbolised in the flowers which open to the sun, and that which comes down from the sun and gives to the flowers the necessary fruit-bearing power, we may see symbolised in the tongues of fire which poured forth their power on the Disciples.

By means of that self-same power, which through comprehension of this festival is able to evoke under-

standing of every festival, Anthroposophy can indeed work upon the hearts of men, and can impart to each one that tone of feeling which may haply prove to be the right one for these days of the Spring Festivals.

Dornach, 7th May, 1923.

The Pentecost of the World

LOOKING back over the history of human evolution one meets with greater or lesser events that have played a part in the life of humanity as a whole. The greatest of all of these is that event which we call the Mystery of Golgotha, through which Christianity entered the evolution of man.

This Mystery of Golgotha was understood very differently at the time in which it took place than was the case later, and in our day it must again be understood in a new way. The right understanding of this Mystery is the mission of Anthroposophy.

In order that we may do this we must transport ourselves into ancient times, when the consciousness of men was entirely different to what it is to-day.

If we go back some three or four thousand years we find that men had an instinctive consciousness that before they came down to earth in physical bodies they had lived in the spiritual world. Every man was then aware that he had within him a soul and spirit-being that was sent down into earthly existence by divine powers. Men's consciousness of death was also entirely different at that time, and because they could look back in memory to a spiritual existence before life on earth, they also knew that that part of them which had lived before their life on earth continued after death.

There were schools at that time which were also religious establishments—they were called Mysteries—where men were instructed in what they were able to know regarding their life before they came down to earth. By this means they learnt that before this earthly existence they had lived among the stars, and among Spiritual Beings, as on earth they lived among plants and animals, mountains and rivers.

Man said: I have come down to earth from that world of the stars. He was aware that the stars were not merely physical, but that each one was the dwelling place of Spiritual Powers with whom he had been in touch before his descent to earth; and he knew that when he laid his physical body aside at death, he would return to the world of the stars—that is to the spiritual world.

Man looked on the sun as the greatest of all the stars, and of all the Beings belonging to the sun he called the greatest the great Sun-Spirit.

In the Mysteries men learnt that before they came to earth the great Sun Being gave to them the power by which they were able to enter the starry world again in the right way after death.

The pupils of the Mysteries were told, and these repeated it again to others: It is the spiritual power of the Sun, the spiritual light which carries you beyond death, and this power you brought with you when at birth you entered earthly existence.

Many prayers, many exalted teachings, came from the teachers in the Mysteries; and these were all in praise, in glorification, of the high Sun-Being, and gave instruction concerning Him.

Teachers in the Mysteries instructed their pupils, and these in turn told the rest of humanity that when

man passed through the gate of death, he had first to penetrate the lower sphere of the stars and to meet with the lower Beings of the stars, and that then he might penetrate to the Sun. He could not, however, go beyond the Sun if the power of the Sun-Being was not given to him.

It came to pass because of this instruction that the hearts of those men who understood the teaching were especially filled with warmth when they prayed to the Spirit of the Sun who gave them immortality.

The poems and religious exercises of devotion that were directed towards the Sun had, as regards the feelings of men, a very specially penetrating value; men felt themselves united with the God of the universe when performing their acts of Sun-worship. Among those peoples where such a Sun worship was customary, cults and ceremonies took place which were specially directed towards acts of Sun-worship or devotion.

This worship consisted, as a rule, of ceremonies in which the image of the God was laid within a grave, and after a day or two was taken from the grave again as a sign that a God—a Sun-God—was in the world, who would always raise men up again when they had succumbed to death.

When performing these ceremonies the sacrificing priest told his pupils, and they told the rest of mankind: "This is the sign that before your descent to earth you dwelt in spiritual realms in which the Sun-God also dwells. Look upwards," he said, "to the sun which gives us light; this sun is but the outer manifestation of the Sun-Being; behind the light of this physical sun is the eternal Sun-God who insures to you immortality."

Thus those who received this teaching knew that they had come down to earth from spiritual worlds, and

had forgotten that world in which the Sun-God dwells. "Through birth," the priest told the faithful, "you have forsaken the kingdom of the Sun-God; you have to find it again through the power He implants in your hearts when you pass through death."

It was known to the initiated priests of the Mysteries that the great Sun-Being of whom they spoke to believers was the same Being of whom men would speak at a later day as the Christ. Before the time of the mystery of Golgotha people were told if they desired knowledge of the Christ that they must not seek Him on earth, but must rise to the Mysteries of the Sun, for only beyond the earth were the Mysteries of the Christ to be found.

It was comparatively easy for men to accept such a teaching, because they retained an instinctive recollection of the kingdom of Christ from which they had descended to earth. Mankind has, however, to pass through evolution, and the instinctive memory of a pre-earthly spiritual life was gradually lost. Eight hundred years before the Mystery of Golgotha only a very small number had any instinctive memory remaining of their pre-earthly spiritual life.

Think for a moment of a man who is passing through death. He goes forth into starry spaces. Gradually he comes to a place where he sees the stars from the other side. From earth we see the sun as we are accustomed to see it; after death we go forth into space and see the sun from the other side; it is not seen as a physical globe but as a realm of Spiritual Beings. Before the Mystery of Golgotha had taken place men beheld the Christ in the sun; they beheld Him from the other side in the time between death and birth.

The instructors in the Mysteries were able to recall

this aspect of the Christ to their pupils; they were able to arouse in them the conception of what they had seen before they came to earth—how they had seen the Sun from the other side. This took place in ancient times, before the Mystery of Golgotha.

The time came, however, when such a remembrance could no longer be aroused, and about 800 years before the Mystery of Golgotha the possibility of stimulating it had grown less and less. No longer could the teacher in the Mysteries say: Look up to the sun, behold in it the manifestation of Christ! Men would no longer have understood them.

The time came when men were no longer able to evoke the memory of spiritual worlds; it seemed as if they were utterly forsaken by the power of Christ. It was then that there first arose in man what we may call the fear of death. Before this they saw the physical body die, but they knew that as souls they belonged to the kingdom of Christ, and were immortal.

Men now became greatly troubled over the fate of their immortality—of the eternal beings within them. It seemed as if the body uniting them with the Christ were severed. This was because they could no longer look into the spiritual world—they could nowhere find the Christ.

It was in this time, my dear friends, when men could no longer find the Christ in supersensible regions beyond the sun that through His infinite mercy and pity He came down to earth so that men might find Him there.

Something now took place in the evolution of the world which cannot be compared with anything within the whole field of human knowledge.

All those beings that are higher than man, the

Angels, Archangels, Archai, etc., up to the most exalted of the divine Beings in the spiritual world, experience metamorphosis only. They are not born, neither do they die. Thus it was said in the Mysteries: Man alone knows birth and death. The Gods do not know death, they only know metamorphosis.

As men were no longer able to reach up to the Christ, the Christ came to them on the earth. Because of this it was necessary that as God He should experience that which Gods had never experienced before—birth and death. Christ in the soul of a man, Jesus of Nazareth, experienced birth and death. This means: For the first time a God passed through human death.

The most essential thing in the Mystery of Golgotha is that it is not merely something that concerns humanity; it is also a concern of the Gods. The Gods decreed: One of us, the high Sun-spirit Himself, has to unite His destiny so closely with that of mankind that He must pass through birth and death. Ever since that time men have been able to look to what occurred on Golgotha, and have been able to find on earth that which otherwise would have been lost to them, because their consciousness was no longer capable of reaching up to heaven—the Christ.

Those who participated first of all in the Mystery of Golgotha—the Disciples and Apostles of Christ, still retained a last remnant of instinctive consciousness of what had then taken place. They knew that the same Being, who formerly could only be found when men were able to look spiritually upon the Sun, was now to be found on earth if they knew how rightly to understand the birth, the life, and the suffering of Jesus Christ.

There were very few at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha who were aware: He Who dwells in Jesus of

Nazareth as the Christ is the mighty Sun-Spirit Who has come down to earth.

Up to the fourth century after Christ it was always known that the Christ Who was the great Sun-Spirit and the Christ Who dwelt in Jesus of Nazareth were the same. This was known until the fourth century.

Our feelings are profoundly stirred when, by means of Spiritual Science, we are able to hear how the men of the early Christian centuries prayed: Thanks be to the Christ for having come down to us on earth from spiritual worlds, otherwise we would have been separated from Him.

After the fourth century had passed people were no longer able to grasp the fact that the high Sun-Being and also the Christ was that same Divinity Who secures immortality to us as men.

From the fourth century until our own age men had only the external words of the Gospels, which relate historically that the Mystery of Golgotha had indeed taken place, but the effect of the words of the Gospels still worked so powerfully throughout the centuries that through them men were able to unite their hearts with that great event.

We confront an age to-day, however, in which men, having learned so much of the secrets of nature, would have become entirely estranged from the words of the Gospels if a new path to the Christ had not been opened up. Anthroposophy has facilitated the entrance of men on this path by leading them back to a knowledge of the spiritual world.

For the Christ event, let me tell you, is only to be comprehended spiritually—as a spiritual fact. Those who do not understand the Christ event as a spiritual fact do not in any way understand it.

By means of Anthroposophical knowledge we can carry ourselves back to the times when Jesus Christ walked in Palestine and experienced His earthly destiny.

We can look within the hearts of the Disciples and Apostles, who, with the help of their instinctive knowledge, were aware: That Being Who formerly dwelt only on the Sun has now come down to earth and has walked among us. He Who has thus walked among us as Christ Jesus—who has trodden the earth—was aforetime only to be found on the Sun. The Disciples said further: From the eyes of Jesus of Nazareth shines forth the light of the Sun, from the lips of Jesus of Nazareth speaks the power of the warmth-giving Sun. When Jesus of Nazareth walks among us it is as if the Sun itself sent forth its light and power into the world.

Those who had a perception of this said among themselves: The Sun-Being walks among us in the form of a man, He Who formerly could only be found when our gaze was turned from the earth and directed to the spiritual worlds.

When the Disciples and Apostles spoke in this way their relationship to the death of Christ was the right one. They were, therefore, able to continue to be His pupils after He had passed through death on earth.

Through Spiritual Science we know that when Christ had forsaken the body of Jesus of Nazareth He walked among His pupils spiritually and continued their instruction.

The power that came to the Disciples and Apostles when the Christ appeared to them in His spiritual body in order to teach them was gradually lost to them. A time came in the lives of these men when they said: We have beheld Him, and now behold Him no more. He

came down to us from heaven to earth. Where is He gone? This point of time when the Disciples believed that they had lost the presence of the Christ is preserved for us in the festival of the Ascension. In the consciousness of the Disciples the fact was registered that the high Sun-Spirit Who had walked the earth as Jesus of Nazareth had once more withdrawn from them. When they experienced this a sorrow came over them with which no sorrow that is experienced on earth can be compared.

In the olden Mysteries, during the celebration of the Sun-Cult, when the image of the God was laid within the earth in order that in three days it might be raised again, great sorrow for the God was felt in the souls of those who took part in the celebrations.

Such sorrow is not, however, to be compared with the greatness of the sorrow which filled the hearts of the Disciples of Christ Jesus.

All truly great knowledge, my dear friends, is born out of sorrow and pain.

When by those means of knowledge, which Anthroposophical Spiritual Science describes, an entrance into the higher worlds is sought, the goal can only be reached by passing through pain. Without having suffered, suffered much, and through suffering become free from the depression of pain, one cannot know the spiritual world.

During the time indicated by the ten days following the Ascension the Disciples suffered dreadfully, for the Christ was withdrawn from their sight. And out of this infinite pain and sadness sprang that which we know as Pentecost. After that the Christ had been lost to their outward instinctive clairvoyance, the Disciples found Him again, through suffering and sorrow, in their

inner being, in their perceptions and inner experiences.

Let us look back once more into early ages before the Mystery of Golgotha, when there was still a memory of a pre-earthly existence. We know that in that pre-earthly existence men received power from the Christ which gave them immortality. Then came the time when men knew that through their own human power they were not able any longer to look back into their pre-earthly existence in spiritual worlds.

At the time of which we are speaking, the Disciples turned back in memory to all they had experienced in connection with the Mystery of Golgotha, and out of their memory, and out of their suffering and their sorrow, there arose again in their souls the power which they had lost when instinctive clairvoyance left them.

Men said of old: Before we were born on earth we were with Christ; He gave to us the power of immortality. Ten days after the external aspect of the Christ was lost to them the Disciples said: We have seen the Mystery of Golgotha. It has given to us the power to feel our immortal nature once again. This power was represented symbolically by the tongues of fire.

Thus, with the help of Spiritual Science, we are able to see in the Mystery of Pentecost that the Mystery of Golgotha had taken the place of the ancient Sun-Myth Mystery. That this was a case of the Sun-Spirit in the Christ was made very clear to Paul when he received the revelation of Damascus. Paul was a pupil of the ancient Initiates of the Mysteries. He realised clearly that the Christ is only to be found when, through clairvoyance, the spiritual world is reached. Now he said: Here are certain Disciples who assert that the Sun-Being has dwelt in a man and has passed through death;

this cannot be, for the Sun-Being can only be seen beyond the earth. So long as Paul believed this, through knowledge gained in the Mysteries, he fought against Christianity.

Had the Christ not come to earth, had He remained God only on the Sun, men on earth would have fallen into decay.

Men would have believed more and more only in the existence of material things. They would have said: The Sun is a material thing; the stars are material also. For mankind had utterly forgotten that they themselves had sprung from a pre-earthly existence, from the spiritual realm of the stars. Such a materialistic type of thought as asserts "all is matter," can endure only for a time. If, for instance, all men for a hundred years were to believe that everything was only matter they would lose the inner power of the spirit within them; they would become as if crippled—as if ill. And this is what would in fact have happened to humanity if the Christ in His infinite mercy had not come down from spiritual worlds to earth.

You might reply to this: Yes, but many people do not wish to know anything of the Christ; they do not believe in the Christ. How is it with them? Why are they not crippled, or weak or ill?

To this I reply: The Christ appeared on earth as the Mystery of Golgotha drew near, not merely to give a teaching to men, but in order to carry through the facts connected with His appearance on earth. He died for all men. The physical constitution of all men, even of those who do not believe on Him, was saved and improved through the Event of Golgotha.

Up to the present time a man might be a Chinese, a Japanese, or an Indian, and wish to know nothing of

the Christ, yet the Christ died for him and for all men. The physical constitution of all men, even of those who did not believe on Him, was saved through that which took place on Golgotha. In time to come this will not be possible to the same degree; for in the future what we call knowledge will be much more important for humanity than has been the case until now.

The necessity will arise ever more and more in human evolution that men should acquire a certain knowledge of spiritual Beings, and of spiritual life.

Such a knowledge, as will lead all men to the spiritual world, is the goal towards which Anthroposophical investigation strives. Through this knowledge, the Christ can again be known, but in such a manner that when anyone has true Anthroposophy he will be able to represent the Christ in a way that will be comprehensible to all men.

The Christianity that has been taught up to now might, if taken to Africa or Asia, be perhaps accepted by a few who would believe in the Christ, but the great mass of the people would reject it, for they would not understand what the missionaries said.

What kind of religion had these people? They had religions that had arisen within the nation, and which could only be understood by the different people, because some holy place or holy person was revered among them.

So long as the Egyptians worshipped their Gods in Thebes, so long had the people to go to Thebes, there to worship in the sacred temples of their Gods. So long as Zeus was worshipped in Olympia, men had to go to Olympia in order to worship him there. In the same way the Mohammedans have to go to Mecca.

Something of this is yet retained in Christianity.

If Christianity is rightly understood, men know: The sun shines for all men, it shines in Thebes, it shines in Olympia, it shines on Mecca. The sun can be seen everywhere physically in the same way, and so the high Sun-Being, the Christ can be worshipped everywhere.

Anthroposophy seeks to show that the Being who before the Mystery of Golgotha could only be reached by instinctive supersensible faculties can since that event be reached by the powers of understanding, which can be developed by man on the earth itself. The saying will be understood once more—The Kingdom of Heaven is come down to earth—and here no thousand year old kingdom is referred to in an uncertain mystic manner, but men will understand by these words that what was formerly to be found on the Sun is, since the Mystery of Golgotha, to be found on earth. We have the Christ, men will say, since the Mystery of Golgotha, for He then came down to earth and dwells on earth among us.

What the Disciples experienced as the Mystery of Pentecost will be experienced ever anew. People will feel that the Christ Himself has come down to earth—a power is dawning in our hearts, they will say, that assures immortality to man.

The words of Christ must, however, be then accepted in all earnestness, such words for example as—I am with you always, even unto the end of the world-age.

And when such words are accepted in all their deep spiritual significance men will rise also to the knowledge that the Christ was not only there at the beginning of our era—He is always there, and speaks to us if we will but hear Him.

We must also learn through Spiritual Science to see spirit in everything material, spirit behind the

solid stone, the plant, and man; spirit behind the clouds and the stars, spirit behind the sun. When through the substance we find the spirit in its reality, we also open our human soul to the voice of Christ, Who speaks to us if we will but hear Him.

Anthroposophy can tell of the spirit behind all nature. Hence it also ventures to speak of spirit in all the historical earthly events of humanity, and of how the earth first acquired "meaning" through the Mystery of Golgotha. That which imparted meaning to the earth before the Mystery of Golgotha was on the sun, since that time it has been united with the earth itself.

Anthroposophy presents this to humanity as an everlasting Pentecostal mystery, and when, prepared by Anthroposophy, men again seek out the spiritual world, they will find it in a way that is needful for the present age, and they will also truly find the Christ as ever present with them. If in this age men do not turn to spiritual knowledge the Christ will be lost to them.

Up till now Christianity did not lay stress on understanding. Christ died for all men; He did not disown them. If men reject Him to-day with their understanding, their intelligence—then they disown the Christ.

As we have met together here exactly at the season of Pentecost, I desired to speak to you of the Christ-Mystery in connection with this mystery.

People often speak of Anthroposophy as if it were an enemy of Christianity. If you really enter into the spirit of Anthroposophy you will find that precisely what it does do is to open the ears, the hearts, the souls of men once more to the Mystery of Christ.

We might indeed consider the destiny of Anthroposophy to be the same as that of Christianity;

for this, however, it is necessary that men should not at the present day merely look towards the dead words that tell of the Christ, but that they turn to a knowledge which leads them to the light in which the living Christ Himself dwells, looking not to the historic Christ Who lived on earth some hundreds of years ago, but to the living Christ, Who now, and in all future times, lives among men on earth, because from their God He has become their divine Brother.

Among our thoughts on Pentecost let us realise the following: That through Anthroposophy we desire to seek the way to the living Christ. Let us feel that in each Anthroposophist the mystery of the first Pentecost may be renewed—that the knowledge of the Christ may dawn in his heart, that he may feel himself enwarmed and enlightened through the flaming tongues of universal Christ-like knowledge.

May our way to that which is spiritual, through Anthroposophy, be at the same time our way to Christ through the Spirit.

If a handful of men earnestly make this knowledge their own, the Mystery of Pentecost will take root ever more firmly among them at the present time and still more so in the future.

Then that will come which is so badly required for the healing and health of humanity, then it will be possible for the Spirit to speak to a new human understanding, the Spirit that heals the sickness of the souls of men—the Spirit sent by Christ. Then will come that of which humanity has so great a need—the Pentecost of the World.

Christiania, 17th May, 1923.

338661-